

Seattle Human Services Department

2005 Accomplishments

“Building strong families and healthy communities”

Homelessness

- **Seeking an end to homelessness** — The Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness was adopted by the city and county councils, the Committee to End Homelessness’ new organizational structure is in place, the city’s RFP awards for 2006 are going to organizations that are working to create a housing system from a shelter system, and the status of homeless veterans has been assessed and ways to improve services and resources determined.
- **Collecting the data needed to identify programs that really end homelessness** — More than half of the homeless shelters in Seattle have reported data into Safe Harbors, a Homeless Management Information System that allows agencies providing shelter, housing and other services to homeless people to collect client and household demographic information. The aggregated data helps local governments and service providers understand needs and trends and improve efforts to move people from homelessness to long-term housing.
- **Sheltering homeless people** — In 2005, the city paid for more than 400,000 bed nights for homeless people and for moving more than 1,500 homeless households into transitional or long-term housing. More than 850 households were able to stay in their homes thanks to rent assistance and/or eviction prevention programs.
- **Finding new sites for the Severe Winter Shelter and Outdoor Meal Programs** — The city spent \$500,000 to renovate a space in City Hall and the Severe Weather Shelter, operated by the Salvation Army, was opened Thanksgiving evening. Meanwhile, the meal program formerly located at the Public Safety Building was moved to First Presbyterian Church. Both programs are operating smoothly.

Children, Youth and Families

- **Supporting children’s early education and school readiness** — Seven community-based organizations launched the Seattle Families and Education Levy’s Seattle Step Ahead Preschools, the new Early Learning Network pre-kindergarten program that will prepare 280 4-year-olds for school success in the 2005-2006 school year. Meanwhile, Seattle’s Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program continued to provide high-quality child development services to 315 3- and 4-year-olds with a grant from the State Department of Community Trade and Economic Development.

- **Supporting home-based early learning** — The Parent Child Home Program, a Families and Education Levy-funded program operated in collaboration with the Greater Seattle Chamber's Business Partnership for Early Learning, funded three agencies to provide an intensive home-visiting program to 200 families with 2- and 3-year-olds. The research-based program, a nationally licensed model, improves children's success in reading.
- **Increasing preschool children's literacy success** — More than 100 3- to 5-year-olds made progress in developing early reading and writing skills at five Seattle Early Reading First (SERF) childhood programs. SERF, a federally-funded program, supports early childhood teachers through professional development and coaching.
- **Supporting child care for low- to moderate-income families** — The Comprehensive Child Care Program provided child care subsidies for 601 children living in 505 Seattle families. Over 97 percent of participating parents and guardians report that the program, funded by the city's general fund, allows them to keep their jobs while providing a good foundation for children to succeed in school and in life.
- **Improving nutrition in family child care homes** — The Child Care Nutrition Program, funded by federal and city general fund sources, paid for 483,000 meals and emphasized the importance of reducing childhood obesity through healthy eating and increased physical activity at home and in child care.
- **Providing summer meals for low-income children** — The federally-funded Summer Food Service Program provided daily meals to nearly 5,500 children at 117 sites, serving 28 percent of all eligible Seattle children (compared to 10 percent served statewide) and increasing the number of children served by 2 percent over the previous year.
- **Supporting children's education through health** — The Families and Education Levy funds 14 school-based health centers and the school nurses in those centers. Levy health services staff is providing medical and mental health services to 1,500 students during the 2005-2006 school year with a goal to improve academic performance.
- **Helping high-risk youth** — Seattle Team for Youth Families and Education Levy funding is providing academic support and contracting with nine community-based agencies to deliver case management services to 715 youth at high risk of dropping out of school and getting involved in the criminal justice system.
- **Helping at-risk students go to college** — All of the high school seniors who were at risk of dropping out of school but then enrolled in this year's federally-funded Upward Bound program operated by the city completed high school and 95 percent of them are now enrolled in post-secondary education programs.

- **Preparing youth for work** — More than 350 youth from low-income families participated in the Seattle Youth Employment Program, which teaches job skills, provides academic support and guidance, and matches participants with subsidized work internships. Over 85 percent of the 2005 participants successfully met their educational and employment goals. Fifty-six students graduated from high school and more than 80 of them went on to get non-subsidized jobs in the private sector. The program is funded by the city's general fund and grants.
- **Engaging homeless youth** — The PRO-Youth case management project reached more than 400 homeless youth and helped more than 80 percent of them to move into longer-term, stable housing. Over 100 youth landed paid internships through the Working Zone component of PRO-Youth, which provides job skills and employment readiness training, and housing stabilization support. PRO-Youth is funded by the city's general fund and federal funds.
- **Supporting and strengthening families** — More than 4,000 families (80,000 visits) participated in the wide variety of programs offered at seven Seattle Family Centers, which are funded by the city's general fund and the Families and Education Levy. Programs include parenting classes, parent support groups and referrals to other community-based, supportive programs.

Immigrants and Refugees

- **Facilitating citizenship for immigrants and refugees** — Nearly 400 low-income immigrants and refugees became citizens through the city's New Citizen Initiative program, funded by the city's general fund and state sources. This exceeded the 2005 goal of 300 new citizens by 25 percent. A majority of the new citizens are seniors and/or disabled persons who would lose SSI benefits and access to other services without U.S. citizenship.
- **Meeting the needs of immigrant and refugee families** — In 2005, more than 1,000 immigrant and refugee families (mostly Chinese and Vietnamese) were provided education, language, job skills, parenting, social benefits enrollment, information referral, advocacy and other important classes and services at the new Family Support Center in the International District. At least 500 other immigrant and refugee families from a variety of cultures, including Latino, East African and other Asian families, were served at other city-funded family centers located in Seattle.
- **Expanding access to meals for immigrants and refugees** — Nearly 200 immigrant and refugee seniors participated in the new Refugee Women's Alliance congregate nutrition program where they enjoyed nutritious meals, engaged in physical activity, and socialized.

Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

- **Helping mature workers meet their basic needs** — The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens' Age 55+ Employment Resource Center helped more than 580 mature job seekers gain job placements, a 43 percent increase over the previous year. This program, funded by the city general fund and federal sources, helps vulnerable aging workers live independently and postpone the need for social services.
- **Transporting elders and persons with disabilities** — In 2005, 3,311 elders and persons with disabilities in Seattle and King County were provided with transportation services, which included volunteer rides to medical and other essential appointments, **van** rides to nutrition sites, ticket book distribution to riders of Metro's regular bus/ACCESS vans, and van shuttles. From 2002-2005, transportation services were provided to an average of 3,300 elders and persons with disabilities each year in Seattle and King County.
- **Engaging senior citizens** — The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens facilitated 5,817 volunteer hours in 2005, a 77 percent increase over the previous year. This general-fund supported project engages elders in their communities as well as younger individuals and groups in activities supporting seniors.
- **Training seniors to use technology** — The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens coordinated 27 computer-savvy senior volunteers to teach 532 elders to use computers for personal enjoyment, communication with family and friends, and work.
- **Supporting economic independence for seniors** — The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens' Utility Assistance Program served nearly 5,100 low-income seniors in the discounted rate program with Seattle City Light and Seattle Public Utilities, a 45 percent participation increase over the previous year. This represented a total utilities savings of more than \$4 million.
- **Helping seniors eat more fruits and vegetables** — From June to October, 2,225 seniors received a Senior Farmer's Market voucher and 840 received twice-monthly market baskets, a 50 percent increase over the previous year. This federally and state-funded program encourages seniors to eat more fruits and vegetables, helping to prevent and manage chronic conditions.
- **Helping seniors stay in their homes** — From 2002 to 2005, an average of 2,720 unpaid family caregivers each year received information, training, counseling and other forms of support from city-funded programs so they could care for elderly, frail or disabled family members in their own homes.

Domestic Violence and Public Health

- **Protecting victims of domestic violence** — Seattle renewed its commitment to help victims of domestic violence by adopting a five-year strategic plan on the criminal justice response to domestic violence. The city plans to work on improving its use of batterer treatment programs, implementing a high-risk offender program, and clarifying the role of advocates who assist victims of domestic violence.
- **Launching the Healthy Communities Initiative** — The city is successfully developing and implementing new policies and programs to oversee the city's public health investments. The city contracted for 15 public health programs and is taking a new academic improvement approach in funding school-based health services.

Community and Economic Development

- **Helping low-income residents** — About 4,500 households were enrolled in Help for Working Families, which helps low- and moderate-income families and individuals to enroll in local, state and federal benefits programs such as utility and food assistance, child care subsidies and health insurance. The estimated value of these benefits is \$7.5 million annually.
- **Refining Community Development Block Grant allocations** — The city developed a new CDBG allocation policy that places a high priority on efforts in Southeast Seattle and on supporting the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness.
- **Supporting business communities during Sound Transit construction** — Community Development Block Grant funds were used to provide business disruption payments totaling \$1.3 million to 60 businesses along the Martin Luther King Jr. Way corridor while Sound Transit puts in the infrastructure for its light rail project.
- **Contributing to a new child care center** — A Community Development Block Grant Community Facilities award of \$240,000 helped to build the new Denise Louie Child Care Center on Beacon Hill. The facility will have room for 80 children.
- **Repairing earthquake damage** — A Community Development Block Grant Community Facilities award of \$510,000 helped the Compass Center, which provides critical services to homeless persons, renovate one earthquake-damaged facility and build a new facility.